

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Amitabh et al.

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Art Unit: 3628

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Examiner: Robinson Boyce, Akiba K.

Title: CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
WITH COMPLIANCE TRACKING CAPABILITIES

Mail Stop AF
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

PRE-APPEAL BRIEF CONFERENCE REQUEST

Sir:

Applicant requests a panel of experienced Examiners perform a detailed review of appealable issues for the above-identified patent application pursuant to the Pre-Appeal Brief Conference program. A Notice of Appeal has been filed together with this Request.

Applicant submits that the above-identified application is not in condition for appeal because the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness based on one or more errors in fact.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-26 are allowable because the cited art fails to teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention.

Claims 1-6, 9-11, 13-16, 18-23 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable by Angel et al., US 2002/0133392 A1 (“Angel”). Claims 7-8, 12, 17, and 24-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Angel in view of Pope et al., US 2003/0055737 A1 (“Pope”). Applicant respectfully submits that the cited art fails to teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention. For example, claim 1 (and similarly claims 10 and 18) recites “a compliance tracking system that retrieves previously loaded customer compliance data from a database.” In the Office Action, the Office states that the call center customer database disclosed by Angel includes “customer compliance” information because “data such as the product used by customer, and problems experienced by customer has an effect and/or relates to a customer meeting *his or her goals* by being escalated or deescalated into a session.” Office Action, p. 13, emphasis added. Applicant disagrees with the Office’s interpretation of what is considered “compliance information” as claimed in the claimed invention. The goals that must be met to indicate compliance in the claimed invention are the goals that are set by the CRM system itself for achievement outside the realm of the CRM, not the user’s goals as the Office acknowledges is the case in Angel. Being “escalated or deescalated into a session” is not a goal set up by the CRM for the user to achieve/complete outside the realm of the CRM. One skilled in the art would not equate such a goal to the example taken from the specification, “in an academic environment, parameters may include whether a student is behind in a particular course, has failed an exam, has too many absences, etc” (pg. 9).

Moreover, as recited in claim 10 (and similarly claims 1 and 18), the present invention provides “displaying a compliance indicator when the customer case management page is viewed.” In the Office Action, the Office states that this compliance indicator “is represented by

the actual CRM system being executed in the particular dialog state specified...” Office Action, p. 14. The Office cites to para. [0059] for support for this argument. However, para. [0059] of Angel simply discloses ways in which a user’s call center question may be escalated from an automated system to a human customer service representative.

The Office further alleges that the “compliance indicator” of the claimed invention is taught in para. [0087] of Angel, as “an exit node indicator on the customer session page.” Office Action, p. 6. Again, Applicant respectfully traverses this interpretation of Angel. The exit node indicator of Angel simply identifies when a user has a customer service issue that has been routed to the wrong automated system, or wrong customer service representative. As the example in Angel indicates, if a user with a Dell PC calls, he will be routed to the Dell knowledge map. However, if the Dell PC user’s issue is actually with his HP printer, an exit node would be triggered and his session would be transferred to the HP knowledge map. This routing of calls to the correct knowledge map is not equivalent to the indicator of the claimed invention which displays whether a user has met pre-set goals that are set by the CRM system. As discussed above, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Office’s argument that the fact that a customer is operating a particular hardware or software operating system represents customer compliance in relation to pre-set goals.

Further, the system of Angel does not teach displaying a compliance indicator on the customer case management page. Even if, arguendo, one did interpret an exit node as a compliance indicator, nowhere does Angel teach displaying the exit node in a customer case management page. Instead, Angel explicitly discloses a dialog that *seamlessly* transfers a user from one web site to another while the user looks to obtain help (see, e.g., para. 0081). In other words, a user of Angel’s system is not even aware that a particular item in a dialog is going to

send them to a different web site until after they click on the link. Thus, such an item cannot possibly, under any reasonable interpretation, be interpreted to indicate compliance. The Office states that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art “to view all cases opened for a given customer with the motivation of allowing retrieval of case information for an entity connected to the immediate network.” 5/27/08 Office Action, p. 4. Notwithstanding whether this is true or not, Applicant respectfully submits that this is not the same as displaying a compliance indicator on a customer case management page. The Office seems to imply that viewing all cases for a particular customer is equivalent to a compliance indicator. Applicant respectfully disagrees. As discussed above, the compliance indicator of the claimed invention displays information processed by the compliance tracking system with respect to the pre-set goals initially set by the CRM for achievement outside the realm of the CRM. It is not simply a recitation of all open cases for any given customer.

Furthermore, claim 1 (and similarly claims 10 and 18) recites “a case management system for managing customer cases.” Applicant submits that Angel fails to teach such a feature. Initially, Applicant points out that Angel teaches a content steering engine (see, e.g., Figure 1) that is used to steer an end user to content in a distributed network to address an existing issue (i.e., it provides on-line customer support). Angel does not teach a case management system for managing customer cases. Angel merely provides a system for submitting queries and retrieving content from one or more disparate providers (see, e.g., claim 1). The Office submits that the definition of the word “case” from dictionary.com is “a specific occurrence or matter requiring discussion, decision, or investigation,” and argues that in Angel, investigation is being performed on the customer service provider. Office Action, p. 12. Applicant respectfully submits that a “case management system” is a term of art as detailed in the specification. No where does the

claimed invention use the term "case management system" in relation to an investigation. Applicant also submits that the customer service personnel do not constitute customers as indicated by the Office on page 12 of the Office Action. The customer service personnel are there to help the customer in the role of a service provider. Accordingly, because the cited art fails to teach or suggest features of the presently claimed invention, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 10, and 18 are allowable.

Each of the claims not specifically addressed herein is believed allowable for the reasons stated above, as well as their own unique features.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case under 35 USC 103(a), and that this application is not in condition for appeal and should either be allowed as is, or re-opened for further prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael F. Hoffman
Reg. No. 40,019
(JF)

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Hoffman Warnick LLC
75 State Street
Albany, NY 12207
(518) 449-0044 - Telephone
(518) 449-0047 - Facsimile